

Know Thy Self & Know Thy Enemy

by Prodigy Of War

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Summary: A story from the Elite pov, follow the beginnings of one of the greatest covenant military commanders as he goes through the covenants greatest foe. From the start of the Human-Covenant war to the destruction of the ark. Discontinued Due To Lack Of Time

Know Thy Self & Know Thy Enemy

****Know Thy Self****

****Know Thy Enemy****

****Chapter One****

****You Will Never Lose****

"The Humans have a saying, one that I personally disagree with. They say that War is Hell. What a novel idea, that war is something uncontrollable. This gives a deeper understanding into their minds, the idea that things are out of their control, that they are victims of factors they will never understand. In the end, they are wrong. War is... Quite simply a equation. If you know all the variables, you will always know the outcome. The problem is that the variables are always changing, always making a new outcome. It takes constant attention and a keen mind to keep the outcome in your favor. It takes a understanding not many can comprehend. You are one of the few of our kind who can understand just what this means."

I looked at the soldier standing near the door of my quarters. I needed to make sure the young man in front of me understood. My eyelids had been feeling so heavy as of later. Though my mind was strong, my body was wearing out. Many battles long past had been writing a bill, waiting for the right time to make me pay it. The debt I had was catching up. I may have waited too long to pick my successor, the other six having long done so. I, Five Of The Seven Swords, had let my blade grow dull, and now I suffered for it.

The soldier in front of me was hesitating. He did so not from a lack of understanding, but a fear of what I could be saying. This man had shown intelligence in all aspects that mattered, even a certain deviousness that a good commander needed in order to win wars. The problem was the nature of the conversation, if most of the common infantry were to be believed, all it took was the strength in ones arms and the warrior spirit. If the priesthood were to be believed, all it took was the will of the Gods, and faith. They were both, correct, and mistaken. A good commander understood this. A great commander understood everything.

He had to respect himself, and know his worth. He had to have humility, and know he was not infallible. He had to be able to measure accurately the strength of his units. He had to be able to know the lay of the land and how to turn it to his advantage, or into his enemies disadvantage. He had to be able to process raw data into accurate intelligence. He had to be able to see the bigger picture. He had to be able to love his men like they were his sons, his brothers, his blood. He had to be willing to send the same men into certain death for the whims of the prophets.

This man had all the qualities needed, all that needed to be destroyed was the last remnants of blind faith. It was those remnants that always fought hardest and died the most bitterly. It was a hard pill to swallow, but it would cure the last of his weakness. First, we start him off on a steady diet of education, then we finish him off with a cold hard dose of truth. It was not the Gods that needed to be cut out of this equation. A healthy respect for ones creator is necessary in every soldier, a belief in something bigger made us stronger. It was the prophets, they twisted our warriors into slaves, and used our strength poorly. If he did not know this, he would never be one of The Seven Swords.

"You know every species in the universe can be classified as a weapon. But not just any weapon, a ancient weapon. You do not find more diversity in styles and strategy, then you do in ancient weapons. We, our species as a whole, are the swords of this universe. We strike where needed, slide through enemies defenses, always parrying or deflecting any attack on ourselves, and then striking in that moment of weakness. Our iron will, and our unflinching bravery to take any blow and return it one hundred fold. But the sword is not always the best solution to our problems, if you'll look back in history, we had quite a bit of trouble against certain races. How much of our history have you studied?"

"I have studied enough to know the outcome of every major battle since first contact with the San 'Shyuum." This was said with the cool confidence of one who had experienced much, and learned from said experiences.

"I see... Then enlighten me, on why we lost the war against the San 'Shyuum." This of course was a trap, but also the test of this warrior's abilities to sense such and how he would react.

Without hesitation the soldier entered into what he knew was a trap, with the stupidity of one following orders blindly. That habit had to die. "We lost because it was the will of the Gods we become the protectors of the San 'Shyuum. They were graced with superior knowledge and mercy."

With a sigh, I knew this would be a very long day with very little rest. Rest I could ill afford to lose, "Were it so easy. We lost because we did not understand our foes. Not because we were destined to suffer defeat, or because they were the better species than us. We lost do to our inability to comprehend the reasons behind their attacks. We expect them to fight like Sangheili, like swords. We... were mistaken. They struck in patterns we could not understand, with methods we could not follow."

"Let us go back in history, starting with our latest conquest, the Jiralhanae, and working our way back to the San 'Shyuum." I turned in my chair, instructing the computer to load up the prearranged images onto the screen.

"Our war with the Jiralhanae was quick, and we suffered almost no casualties. Why? Was it because we had air superiority? It certainly helped, but that was not why. Was it because we were foretold victory by the prophets? Not remotely, if you assume victory, you gain nothing but defeat. We lost over seventy-five percent of our casualties in the first three months of the surface campaign. Their Hammer broke our Sword many times before we learned not to catch their swing on our blades. No, we won because the Jiralhanae only know how to react like a Hammer. No matter what the situation, they smash their problem into submission or oblivion, which ever happens first. The only reason they are not the simple club is because they understand the use of weapons, and will use them. This gives them more shape, turning from a simple stick into a much more powerful Stone Hammer. It was always very easy to predict what they would do, simply by the numbers they had on the field at any given moment."

Keying the next sequence, I moved onto the Unggoy. "The next species on our list barely warrants mention. They lasted one month against our forces, in every engagement against our forces they would rush forward with their superior numbers, try to close the distance to engage with our forces and at the first sign of trouble would cause their forces to break and run like the cowards their race is made of. The only time they won an engagement against our forces was when a scouting party got lost in one of the cave systems on their surface. Outnumbered a hundred to one, they died underneath the crushing weight and tearing teeth. If they were to be called a weapon, it would have to be a Dagger. Not a very effective weapon, but when used in the correct manner, it too can kill. You must maintain and care for that dagger, or someday it may end up in your back. "

The next string of images were the Kig-Yar. "This is one of the few species we actually engaged in ship to ship combat with. They are very precise, like an Ax. They would ambush and raid us, hacking at us before withdrawing to do so again. I wish we could say we had a definite victory over them, and I do believe we would have won had the war lasted longer. However the Prophets decided they would be useful serving us, and so bought out their species. They will only serve so long as it benefits them, remember that."

Yanme'e filled the screens by the hundreds, if not the thousands. "Of the Yanme'e, there is little to say, they are intelligent, but only in groups. They work together like each is a link in a far bigger chain. This is why I would accord them the ancient weapon that is the Flail. With each link they get deadlier, swinging the great weight

that is the hive to smash their enemies, the only problem is the Unmutuals. They will kill you or I without hesitation, and they have intelligence and trickery, they fit even more into the Flail category as there is always a chance when working with the Yanme'e that a Unmutual will attack you, just like when swinging a Flail there is a chance you may injure yourself."

The images changed into the great Mgalekgolo. "The Lekgolo are one of most interesting intelligent creatures in the universe. They are a hive, yet they are a single creature, but comes in pairs... As a species, I can not define them, but as warriors, they are the Mace. They strike heavily, but pierce any defense, they are a very offensive weapon that needs no other defense then itself. They should be respected, and known for the force that they are."

One last change of the screen, the Prophets taking center stage once more. With a sigh, I turned back to the soldier. "This brings us back to the San 'Shyuum. To this day I have yet to be able to categorize them into a form I could understand. Know Thy Self, and we never need fear defeat. Know Thy Enemies, and the outcome of every battle is yours to decide. We serve them, but even now we can not predict their methods. For example, what is the cause of their hatred for humans? What makes the Humans so different from us, or any of the other species who fight by our sides?" With that, I knew there was only two outcomes now, the creation of a commander worth his troops or my death. Probably the painful one of a heretic.

This was the last assignment, the last job before going home. "I do not understand." Perhaps it was too early to be making this gamble, but the dice had been tossed, it was time to watch them roll... With any luck, my head would not roll with them.

****A/N** This is a story following a covenant shipmaster through the halo universe. He will fight in both know, and unknown battles, as the force behind the movements. Most of the time you will only see the grand chess master at work as he slowly puts together the equation that will win him the war. We will see if he solves it in time to save his ship from total destruction. We Started with his first lesson, and we will finish with his last.**

****Oh** and from now on this is in competition with _Naruto: Journey Of The Sixth Hokage!_ Most reviews gets first priority. Though I will not allow streaks to get past 3 chapters in a row before updating the other.**

End
file.